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Aging Committee, February 18, 2020

Senate Bill 58 An Act Deterring Age Discrimination in Employment Applications

Senator Slap, Representative Serra, Senator Kelly, Representative Wilson and distinguished members of the Aging Committee, I am State Senator Tony Hwang, representing the 28th State Senate District and thank you for the opportunity to testify in support of S.B. No. 58 An Act Deterring Age Discrimination in Employment Applications.

Senate Bill 58 will prohibit employers from asking the age, date of birth, or graduation dates of job applicants, unless knowing the person's age is an occupational qualification.

A 2018 AARP survey found about 60% of older workers have seen or experienced age discrimination in the workplace, and 76% of them see age discrimination as a hurdle to finding a new job. With 436,000 workers in their mid-50's, Connecticut has the 6th-oldest workforce in the nation.

Every person at any age should have the same opportunity to succeed and achieve the American Dream. Age should never be used against you when applying for a job. This is an issue of fairness.

I stand in support of this bill and in agreement with the AARP statement that while intentional or not, knowing someone's age can create bias that keeps a qualified job applicant from getting a fair chance at being considered for a position. This legislation reduces that risk and levels the playing field.

In closing, I want to thank all the lawmakers who worked together to bring Senate Bill 58 forward including Senators Kevin Kelly and Derek Slap and all the advocates supporting this proposal, including the AARP, the Connecticut Business & Industry Association, The WorkPlace in Bridgeport, and the Seniors Job Bank.